

TOWN OF COVENTRY HOUSING AUTHORITY

MINUTES

AUGUST 20, 2014

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Robert DiPadua at 4:30 p.m. and the following commissioners were present: Maurice DeGraide, Rosalie Jalbert, David Jervis and Rebecca Parenteau. Julie Leddy, Executive Director and Arthur Capaldi, Legal Counsel were also present.

MINUTES

Motion was made by Commissioner Jalbert and seconded by Commissioner DeGraide to accept the minutes of the July 16, 2014 meeting as presented. Motion carried with all in favor.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Motion was made by Commissioner Jervis and seconded by Commissioner Jalbert to approve the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried with all in favor.

Year to date Financials through 6/30/2014 show that in Public Housing, revenues continue to exceed the budget at 3% with a slight

drop in reserves, to 67%. Routine expenses are 4% over budget for the first six months, which still contain the seasonal winter heating expenses. Non-routine expenses will be over budget for the fiscal year due to the timing of the payment for the KOV walkway work, funds were anticipated to be spent in 2013, not 2014.

The Section 8 program remains 95% leased up in vouchers with a push to get over 100% for year end, which will have the Authority earning the maximum admin fee allowed for the Agency. HUD has reconciled the first quarter actual lease ups and the Authority has been obligated an additional \$8,800 (not yet received). Routine expenses remain 2% under budget.

The Management Program is right on target for expected program net income to date by keeping units leased and rent collections up. Julie continues to anticipate a \$26,000 addition to the unrestricted reserve (\$48,000) by year end.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Projects:

Knotty Oak Village/Building Entrance Walkway

- Temporary speed bumps have been installed and remaining punch list items are complete.
- One crosswalk has not been striped - working with contractor to resolve this.
- Awaiting certified payrolls and lien releases prior to discharge of final payment.

Proposals are being received for the following work:

- New entrance sign at Manchester Circle; sign to include “Smoke-Free Housing” as well as “No Solicitation.” Following the installation of the new sign, a Nursery will be contacted to revitalize the “hill.”**
- Re-striping of parking places and painting of speed bumps at NRT was done yesterday by Express Sweeping.**

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- Replace trash area fencing; priority at NRT, then KOV and JOH.**
- Fall cleanups**

Vacancies as of 8/1

- a. Public Housing - 1 vacancy**
- b. Management Portfolio - 3 vacancies**

General

A meeting was held with the residents on July 29th to discuss the Five Year Plan of the Authority and the Capital Fund Program. Discussion was also held regarding the policies of the Housing Authority. Residents were encouraged by the Smoke-free policy and discussions were held regarding a “designated smoking area.” Discussion was held in reference to the Annual Capital Fund Grant

received by the Housing Authority and management gave a review of their anticipated needs, which are based on useful life of building systems, structures (roofs, etc) and grounds.

Several items were addressed in the immediate and are (will be) funded through current operations:

- New community hall tables at NRT
- Remove wooden benches from community hall screen room (one was removed)
- Replace trash area fencing
- Cordless microphone for community hall
- Spell out resident parking

Other recommendations from residents are as follows and are incorporated into this five-year plan.

1. Automatic doors in common areas. Residents would like to see the door into the residential unit area open automatically when the front entrance door is opened. Management discussed “magnetizing” doors, tied to the fire alarm system, where doors could remain open and closed automatically if the fire alarm goes off.

2. Screen doors at front and rear doors; they are just worn out, requiring a lot of adjustments. Management informed residents that specs have already been prepared for this work and doors that have the screens built in would be installed.

3. Stair treads are becoming very worn in the common areas at KOV.

4. NRT residents would like to see the Community Hall expanded - they just need more space. Additionally, they would like to use a part of the Maintenance storage room for more storage space. Discussion took place on the costs of expanding the hall with the limited amount of resources to perform this work that is more amenity vs. safety and security.

5. Residents would also like to see picnic table areas put in around the properties. Management discussed the recent donation of paver stones from the local Home Depot and that it will be determined how many patio-type areas can be made from them.

6. KOV would like to see the kitchens remodeled. While these areas are functional, they are just plain 'tired.'

7. Discussion was held regarding the possibility of replacing emergency rear egress asphalt walkways with cement walkways.

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8. Purchase a handicap accessible van and hire a driver to take residents to local shopping plazas

9. More notice/signage on where Visitor Parking areas are - distinguish between resident and visitor parking.

10. Increase curb appeal (flowers, signage) at entrances to properties.

Housing Management staff have had a busy summer introducing outside programs to the tax credit properties (Crossroads and Meadows). First, through a grant, a six-week Karate/bullying program

was offered. There was an average of 15 - 18 children that came each week and their graduation is Tuesday evening, August 12th. Additionally, the RI Rebellions (professional rugby team) came out on Sunday, August 10th for a day of instruction, flag rugby, and a “healthy cookout.” There were over twenty children from both properties attending this event. A six week yoga program, which will also be funded through a grant, will be introduced in the fall for the parents.

Julie reported that a meeting was held with the Boy Scouts a few weeks ago to discuss the possibility of starting a new troop at the Meadows.

Julie brought in an office temp for eight weeks to get caught up on the input of the applications to the Section 8 program. There are over 3,500 applications to get entered.

Julie reported that there is an issue with bed bugs at the Authority. The residents are being educated on this issue and all are being cooperative. Laundry will be done off site for those involved and the laundry room will be treated on Friday just to reassure residents.

Julie thanked everyone for making possible the dedication service to past commissioner, Eddie Jacques. It was a nice morning and the placement of the stone is so deserving for his service.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Two new boilers were installed in the main building at Knotty Oak Village. New vinyl fencing will be installed around the trash areas at KOV, NRT and JOH.

HOUSING REPORT

In Public Housing, everything is going well, when there is a vacancy, it gets filled. Rental income is greater than what was budgeted.

In the Housing Choice Voucher program, the numbers are slowly creeping up and are now at 270.

In the Management Program, vacancies remain calm.

RESIDENT SERVICE COORDINATOR

The smoking cessation program has come to an end. The program coordinator made arrangements with one participant for additional support.

FAMILY SELF SUFFICIENCY

The program's seventh Homeowner closed on July 3rd. She remains on the FSS program to complete her goal of pursuing a Bachelor's Degree.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Letter from HUD regarding Admin Fee Increase. Proration will increase from 75% to 79% for the vouchers issued.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Awning - Rear of KOV Community Hall After review of options, Julie is recommending a permanent roof above the patio area, as had been done at NRT. She has contacted the Coventry High School to determine if the Vo-Tech department needs a "community" project for the upcoming school year. She has also contacted the architect to do a pre-plan and sketch on how to roof the area. Commissioners DiPadua and DeGraide were available for this discussion. When speaking with the architect, he was asked to make the roof structure compatible for future expansion of a closed in screen room. The architect delivered the plan today and Julie distributed copies to the board.

Julie will wait on this to see if the High School responds.

Commissioner Jervis will get information from Guy Lefebvre on different options for outdoor furniture. Commissioner DiPadua asked if money could be put in the five year plan for this project. Motion was made by Commissioner Jalbert and seconded by Commissioner Jervis to put \$25,000 in the five year plan for this project. Commissioner Parenteau stated that it would be a good idea to add money for tables. Motion carried with all in favor.

B. NRT Replacement Entry Doors

As previously discussed, two bids were received for this work; one from Freeport Contracting for \$89,700.00 and one from M & J Construction for \$83,831.00. A request for reassignment of funds was requested from HUD. An environmental review must be approved before this can happen. Motion was made by Commissioner Jalbert and seconded by Commissioner Jervis that, after receipt of HUD approval for the reassignment of Capital Funds, this proposal be awarded to the low bidder, M & J Construction in the amount of \$83,831.00. Motion carried with all in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Staff Retreat

Julie informed the board that it has been five years since she has been able to do a one-day, off-site retreat with the staff of the Authority. Since that time, four staff members have been added as well as several other changes. She feels that the staff needs team

building and is recommending the approval of a one day, off-site retreat with the staff and herself at the URI Alton Jones campus. Approximate cost for the day is \$2,400 and funds are

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available. Motion was made by Commissioner DeGraide and seconded by Commissioner Jalbert to approve the request for a staff retreat. Motion carried with all in favor.

B. Conferences

Julie reported that there are two major conferences during 2014; Leo Dauwer Executive Director and Board seminar at Martha's Vineyard in September and NAHRO National in Baltimore, MD in October. She is not planning to attend either and is also not planning to send staff. She is recommending that funds would be better spent on the employee retreat.

After further discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Jalbert and seconded by Commissioner DiPadua to send Commissioner Jervis to the Leo Dauwer Conference in September. Motion carried with all in favor.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Commissioner Jalbert said that at the open meeting with the residents, there was talk about a breakfast with the residents. Attorney Capaldi said that this would be a regular meeting if all of the commissioners were present and would have to be posted. Julie said that it could be posted as a “meet the board.” Commissioner Jalbert said that she felt that the residents should know who the board members are. Attorney Capaldi responded that the residents should attend the open monthly meetings in order to meet the board.

Commissioner DeGraide brought up discussion about a vehicle that had to be towed because it did not get moved by the owner when the lines were painted on the road. He said that the cost for towing the vehicle was \$55 and asked Julie if she was reimbursed by the tenant. Julie responded that she waived the charge because the tenant was hospitalized.

Commissioner Jalbert discussed the newsletter. She said that she had trouble reading it because the black on red color made it difficult.

She did some research on other newsletters and said that Woodland’s newsletter was easier to read but did not contain as much content. Commissioner Jalbert submitted what she researched to Julie.

There being no further business to discuss, motion was made by Commissioner DiPadua and seconded by Commissioner Jervis to adjourn. Motion carried with all in favor.

GAIL T. WOODWARD
RECORDING SECRETARY